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No. 4472 P. 2/3

Appln. No. 09/955,858
Amendment dated November 13, 2003
Reply to Office Action of August 21, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 2 and 7 and amend claims 1, 3-6, 8 and 9 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). An image data acquisition method comprising:

scanning a sample, which includes a plurality of spots on a substrate, by with a light beam;

5 acquiring scanned image data by receiving a light from the sample, to acquire a scanned image data; and

sequentially storing the acquired scanned image data obtained by scanning a region of a predetermined size every time a region scanned by with the light reaches a predetermined size,
10 sequentially wherein the size of the scanning region is adjusted based on the acquired scanned image data such that boundaries of adjacent scanning regions do not overlap the plurality of spots on the substrate.

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Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 2, wherein the sequentially stored acquired scanned image data position information on respective scanning regions is stored by adding to be added to each item of
5 the scanned image data sequentially stored position information regarding respective scanning regions thereto.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 2 1, wherein the sample is a DNA microarray in which a plurality number of spots are arranged as a measurement object, and the size of the scanning region is such
5 that a boundary in the scanning region is not overlapped on the spot.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 2 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is carried out performed by main scanning and sub-scanning in a direction orthogonal to the main scanning thereto, and
5 adjustment of the size of the scanning region is carried out

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adjusted by regulating the number of scanning lines of during the main scanning.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein an analysis processing is executed for the stored scanned image data in parallel with scanning of a next region when the storage of the scanned image data is complete ~~completes~~.

Claim 7 (Cancelled).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is carried out by main scanning and sub-scanning in a direction orthogonal to the main scanning ~~thereto~~, and both of
5 the main scanning and the sub-scanning are carried out by moving the sample.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is carried out by main scanning and sub-scanning in a

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direction orthogonal to the main scanning thereto, and the main
5 scanning is ~~carried out by~~ conducted with an optical scanner.